

# NIGHTMARE

47364

60¢



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A SKYWALD HORROR-MOOD PUBLICATION

NO. 12 APRIL 1973



## I AM DEAD: I AM BURIED

...I AM DEAD AND YET ALIVE IN THIS TOMB-SWAMP...  
...I NEED YOUR HELP..YOU MUST HELP BURY ME!

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# NIGHTMARE

— EDITED BY ALAN HEWETSON —

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## NIGHTMARE IN THE HOUSE OF POE

## THE NIGHT OF THE CORPSE-BRIDE

## MONSTER MONSTER on the WALL

## I AM DEAD: I AM BURIED!

## PREMATURE BURIAL

*...welcome...  
...to the  
Swamp  
Issue...*

*...herein many macabre  
things in Swamps slither  
about and tell Weird  
Tales of Horror  
purposely wrought  
to defile your  
mad mind . . . come  
enter . . .*

*...this is the...*

*Nightmare  
In The  
Swamp*

## THE ASSASSIN-BUG



NUMBER 12 - APRIL 1973

A GLOOMY, STORMY, MOONLESS NIGHT. RAIN BATTERS THE SHUTTERS ON OUR RATTLETRAP WINDOWS - AND WE HEAR THEM CLANGING IN OUR SLEEP; IN OUR DREAMS ARE HORRIBLE GOINGS-ON; WE KNOW WE ARE ONLY ASLEEP... THAT DREAMS ARE NOT REALITY... BUT OUR SLEEP IS NOT EASY. AND WHEN WE AWAKE WE CANNOT STAY AWAKE; WE DRIFT BACK INTO A BLACK VOID OF HORROR AND HELPLESSNESS.

GENTLE READERS, WATCH THE MAN IN GRAY, RODNEY SERLE. HE'S THE MAN IN THE...

# NIGHTMARE IN THE HOUSE OF POE

THIS IS INSANITY!!  
I MUST HAVE BEEN  
OUT OF MY MIND  
COMING TO NEW  
ORLEANS AT A TIME  
LIKE THIS!

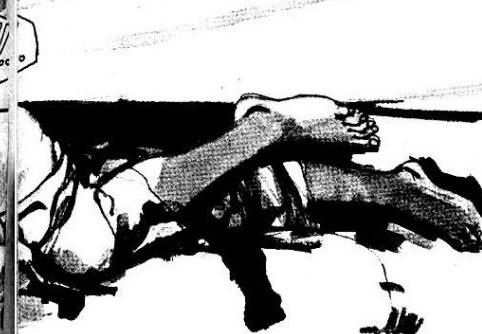
FERRAN  
SCOTTLES +  
AL HEWETSON

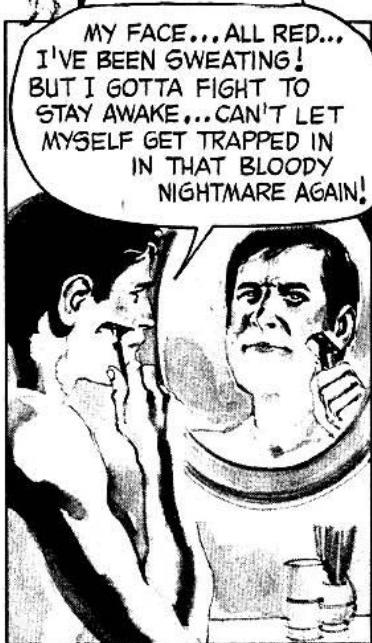


...AND SO STARTS CHAPTER 1: *The NIGHTMARE*









NO...NO...IT'S  
NOT POSSIBLE! I'M  
STILL ASLEEP...I'M STILL  
DREAMING! IT'S STILL MY  
NIGHTMARE...DEAR GOD!!  
I CAN'T WAKE UP...I  
CAN'T WAKE UP...I  
CAN'T WAKE UP!

EEEEEEAAAAUUUUUGHAAH!

THE DREAM GOES ON AND ON AND ON. THE NEVER ENDING CLATTER OF SHUTTERS WILL WAKE HIM EVERY FEW MINUTES, BEFORE LONG HE WILL START TO REMEMBER! HE WILL REMEMBER THAT HE THOUGHT HE WAS AWAKE... AND THE DREAM WILL GO ON. AND SOON HE'LL BELIEVE THAT HE'LL NEVER WAKE UP... AND PERHAPS HE WON'T!

NOW-CHAPTER 2:  
Beneath The House  
of Poe



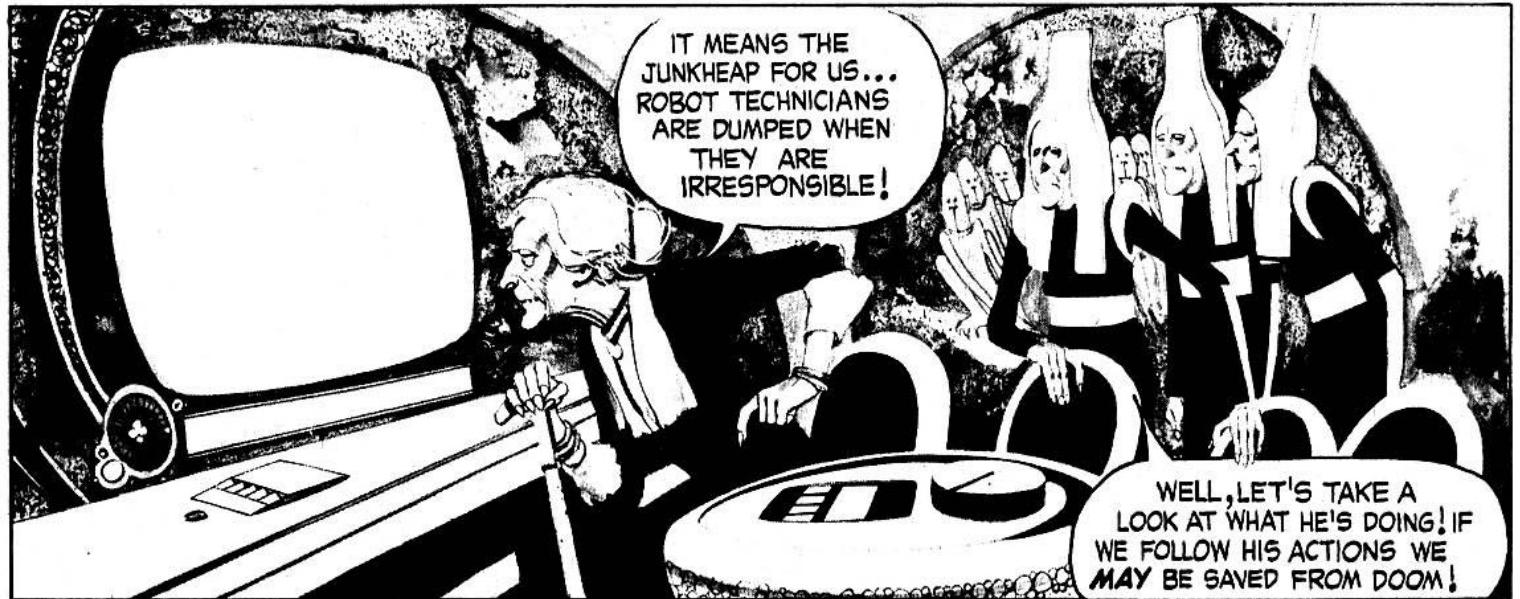
THE DREAM GOES ON AND ON FOR RODNEY SERLE  
BUT DOES IT REALLY? IS THAT ONLY HOW IT APPEARS  
TO A MAN NEAR COMPLETE MENTAL COLLAPSE?  
RODNEY SERLE DREAMED THE DREAM OF DREAMS...  
THE NIGHTMARE FROM WHICH HE COULD NOT  
AWAKE ...THE NIGHTMARE IN WHICH HE KNEW HE  
WAS ASLEEP BUT COULD DO NOTHING!

... NOTHING, SAVE ACCEPT AND SUFFER THE TORTURE...  
THE ANGUISH OF KNOWING IT WAS TIME THAT  
TORTURED HIM...ONLY TIME! UNTIL HE BEGAN TO  
WONDER WHETHER HE WOULD EVER WAKE UP!

AND SO CONTINUES  
OUR TALE...WITH A  
BLOCKBUSTER  
TWIST...

WELL NOW WE'RE  
IN FOR IT...REALLY  
IN FOR IT! WE'VE MADE  
FOOLISH BLUNDERS  
BEFORE BUT IT LOOKS  
LIKE WE'VE REALLY  
DONE IT THIS  
TIME!!





HE'S OUT WANDERING  
AROUND SOMEWHERE  
GOING OUT OF HIS  
HEAD ... RIGHT OUT  
OF HIS HEAD!

THEY'LL NEVER  
UNDERSTAND HIM ...  
HE'LL NEVER EVEN  
UNDERSTAND  
HIMSELF !

THE POOR MAN  
STILL THINKS HE'S  
ASLEEP! HE'S WAITING  
TO WAKE UP AGAIN BUT  
DOESN'T REALIZE **HE**  
**NEVER WILL** BECAUSE  
HE'S **NOT ASLEEP!**

LOOK AT THEM...  
PUTTING HIM IN A  
CAGE! UNTIL HE  
**CURES HIMSELF...**  
WHICH HE WON'T  
OF COURSE!

ACTUALLY, HE WAS SWIPED  
BACK A HUNDRED YEARS IN  
TIME...IT WASN'T HIS IMAGINATION  
...IT WASN'T JUST A NIGHTMARE!  
THE VIBRATIONS IN THIS HOUSE  
OF OUR DREAM-MAKING WERE  
**SO STRONG** THAT HIS  
NIGHTMARE CAME TRUE ...WE  
**ACTUALLY KNOCKED HIM**  
BACK A HUNDRED  
YEARS!

THIS HOUSE ... USED BY THE  
**ANCIENT ONES** AS  
HEADQUARTERS FOR THEIR  
CONTROL OF HUMAN IMAGINATION...

CONTROL OF IMAGINATION, THAT'S  
PUTTING IT MILDLY!! UNTIL THIS  
CENTURY, MAN WAS SO RIDDEN  
WITH SUPERSTITION THAT THE  
**BLACK ARTS**...THE INCREDIBLE  
ACTS PERMITTED BY THE **ANCIENT  
ONES** SINCE MANKIND'S BIRTH...  
WERE TREATED  
WITH **RESPECT**...

THIS MADE THE **BLACK MAGIC**  
OF THE **ANCIENT ONES** MUCH  
MORE DIFFICULT FOR THEM TO  
PERFOM... BECAUSE  
EVERYONE KNEW  
ABOUT IT!

AND THAT'S THE  
WHOLE THING!! **NOBODY**  
TAKES THE BLACK ARTS,  
MAGIC OR WITCHCRAFT,  
SERIOUSLY ANYMORE! IT'S  
ALL A BIG JOKE ... ALL  
**HOCUS POCUS**... AND  
THAT'S WHAT THEY  
WANT...

AND NOW THAT  
THEY'VE DEVISED THIS  
DREAM FACTORY TO  
CONTROL DREAMS AND  
NIGHTMARES, THEY CAN  
CONTROL PEOPLE'S  
ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE  
BLACK ARTS!

FOR NONE TO BELIEVE  
IN IT! THEN THEY CAN WRECK  
HAVOC ON MANKIND AND MEN  
WON'T KNOW **WHY**!! MEN  
WON'T BE ABLE TO FIGHT IT  
AS THEY DID IN  
CENTURIES PAST...  
WITH WITCHBURNINGS  
AND PERSECUTIONS!

**HYPNOS**!! WE  
BOW TO YOU  
ANCIENT ONE...  
WE OFFER YOU  
OUR **LIVES**!!

I AM YOUR LIVES YOU  
WORTHLESS CONGLOMERATES  
OF SCRAP METAL!! WHO  
IS RESPONSIBLE FOR  
THIS...THIS SERLE MAN  
NOT BEING MONITORED??  
THE ENTIRE  
OPERATION IS NOW  
IN JEOPARDY  
BECAUSE OF  
SOMEONE'S  
STUPIDITY...

... WHEN I FIND  
OUT **WHO**  
ALLOWED THIS,  
IT'LL BE **OFF**  
WITH THEIR  
**HEADS**!



WHAT...I'M AWAKE!!  
THEN IT WAS ONLY A  
DREAM...ALL OF IT...  
ALL OF IT!



NO! NO! IT'S NOT... IT'S  
NOT POSSIBLE!?! I'M STILL  
ASLEEP! I'M STILL DREAMING...  
IT'S STILL MY NIGHTMARE!!!

THE BLOODY NIGHTMARE  
IS GOING TO GO ON  
FOREVER AND EVER...

EEEEEE AAAAAAUUUUGHHH

WE LEAVE THE MATTER WITH **YOU** DEAR READER.  
IS HE AWAKE AND GOING MAD? OR IS HE STILL  
ASLEEP AND ONLY HAVING HIS NIGHTMARE? OR  
PERHAPS... IS THIS ALL A KIND OF BIZARRE  
**REALITY** WHICH WE OF SANE MIND WILL NEVER  
UNDERSTAND? WE LEAVE IT WITH **YOU**... SOLVE IT  
SOMETIME... LIKE MAYBE **TONIGHT** AS YOU PULL  
THE ICY SHEETS UP OVER YOUR HEAD AND SHUDDER...  
... AND WELL YOU MIGHT SHUDDER TOO... FOR YOU  
KNOW YOU WILL SOON BE **FAST ASLEEP!**

TO BE **BURIED ALIVE** IS, BEYOND QUESTION, THE MOST TERRIFIC OF EXTREMES WHICH HAS EVER FALLEN TO THE LOT OF **MERE MAN**... THAT IT HAS **FREQUENTLY FALLEN** WILL SCARCELY BE **DENIED** THOSE WHO THINK-- FOR AT **BEST**, THE **BOUNDARIES** WHICH DIVIDE **LIFE FROM DEATH** ARE **SHADeOWeY AND VAGUE!**



THERE ARE MANY TRUE RECORDED INSTANCES OF BEING BURIED ALIVE... ONE SUCH CASE TOOK PLACE NOT LONG AGO IN THE CITY OF BALTIMORE... A PROMINENT CONGRESSMAN'S WIFE DIED AND WAS ENTOMBED IN THE FAMILY CRYPT...

TWO DAYS AFTER THE CRYPT WAS SEALED SHE AWOKE FROM HER SLEEP -- FOR THAT WAS WHAT IT WAS, A DISEASED SLEEP -- AND FINDING HERSELF IN HER BIZARRE SITUATION STRUGGLED TO EXIT HER COFFIN...



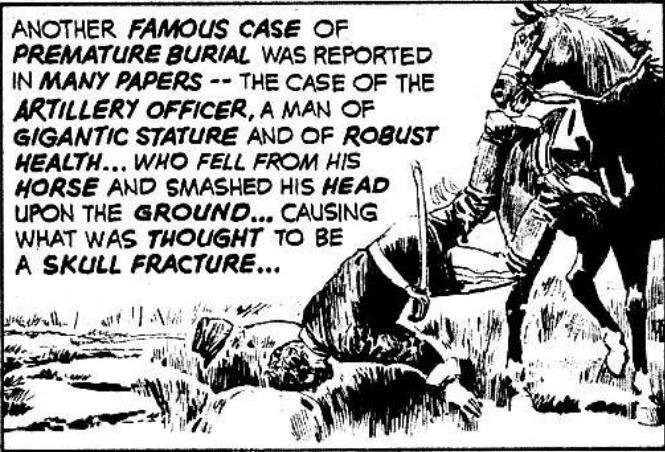
A YEAR LATER WHEN THE HUSBAND CAME TO VISIT THE CRYPT HIS WIFE'S BODY FELL ON HIM AS HE OPENED THE HEAVY WROUGHT-IRON DOOR... TO HIS ABSOLUTE HORROR HE REALIZED THE AWFUL TRUTH!



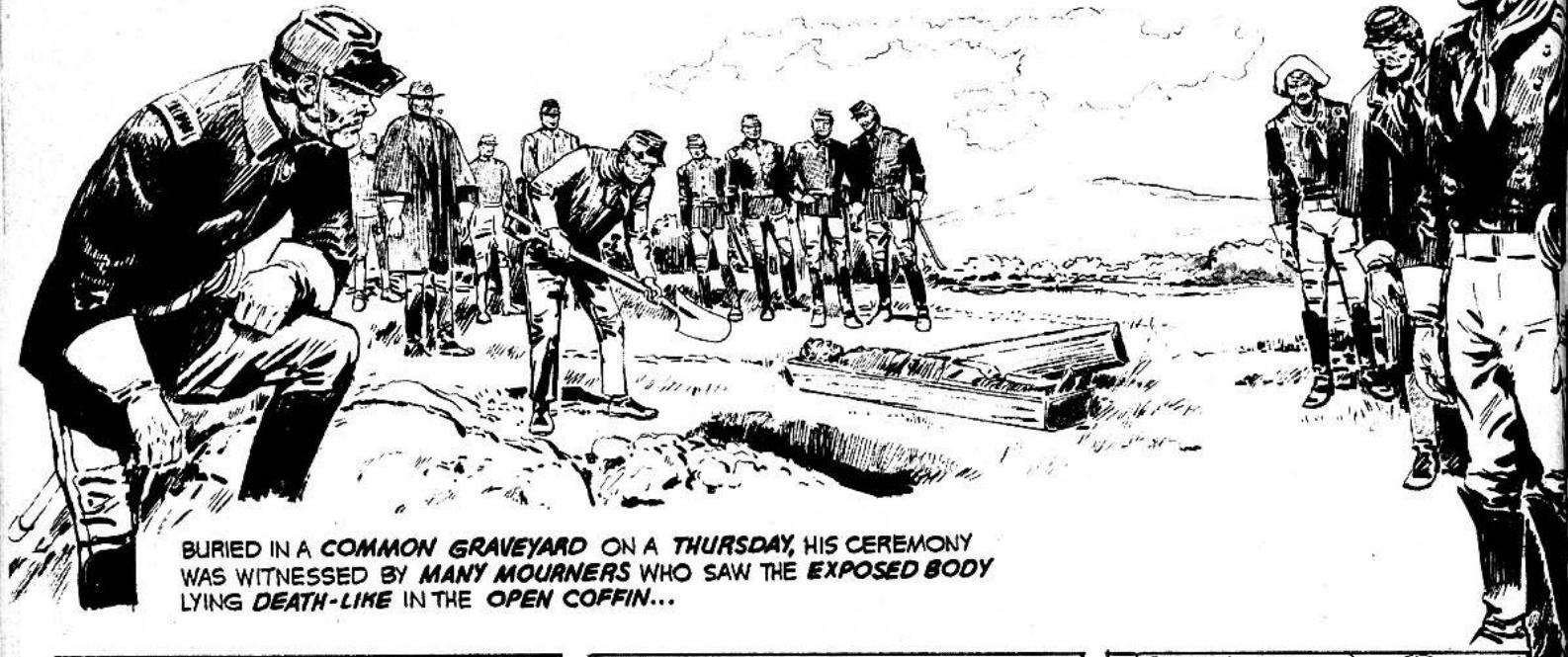
... ADAPTED FROM THE SHORT STORY BY EDGAR ALLAN POE...  
... THE ULTIMATE TALE OF HORROR ...

# PREMATURE BURIAL

ANOTHER FAMOUS CASE OF PREMATURE BURIAL WAS REPORTED IN MANY PAPERS -- THE CASE OF THE ARTILLERY OFFICER, A MAN OF GIGANTIC STATURE AND OF ROBUST HEALTH... WHO FELL FROM HIS HORSE AND SMASHED HIS HEAD UPON THE GROUND... CAUSING WHAT WAS THOUGHT TO BE A SKULL FRACTURE...



AS IS THE NORMAL CUSTOM--THE DOCTORS BLEED THE IMPURE BLOOD FROM HIS SYSTEM IN AN ATTEMPT TO SAVE HIS LIFE... BUT IT WAS FOR NO GOOD PURPOSE... FOR THE SOLDIER SOON DIED...



BURIED IN A COMMON GRAVEYARD ON A THURSDAY, HIS CEREMONY WAS WITNESSED BY MANY MOURNERS WHO SAW THE EXPOSED BODY LYING DEATH-LIKE IN THE OPEN COFFIN...

BUT ON THE SUNDAY FOLLOWING THE DAY OF HIS BURIAL WHILE A PEASANT SAT UPON HIS GRAVE...



AND WHEN THEY UNEARTHED THE COFFIN...

GOOD LORD... THE MAN MUST STILL BE ALIVE... HE'S KNOCKED OPEN THE LID OF THE COFFIN... SCRAMBLED AT THE LOOSE DIRT THAT COVERED HIM...



BUT HE'S DEAD...

...EVEN SO... BETTER CALL THE MEDICAL AUTHORITIES! ... THEY'LL WANT TO TAKE A LOOK AT THIS UNHOLY BURIAL...



THERE IS NO QUESTION  
GENTLEMEN... THIS MAN  
IS QUITE DEAD!

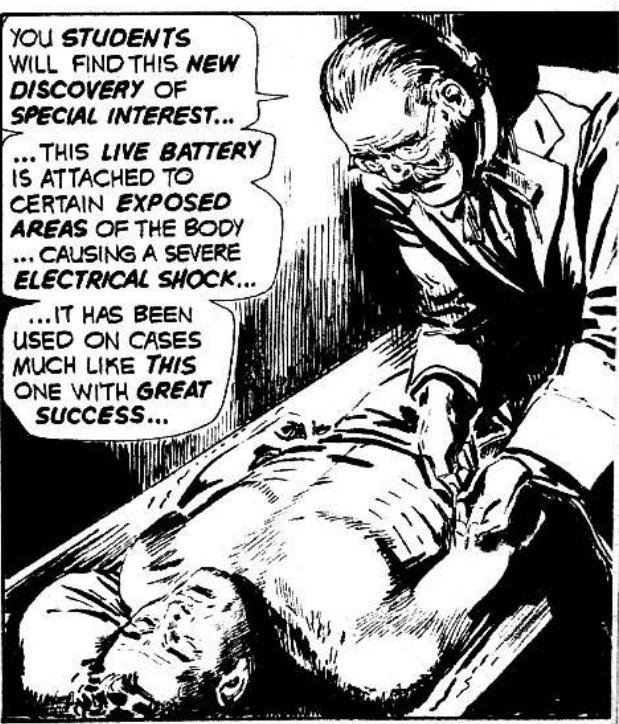
HOWEVER... SINCE HE WAS ONCE THOUGHT  
DEAD BEFORE IT WILL DO NO HARM TO  
MAKE A FEW SIMPLE TESTS WITH THIS  
GALVANIC BATTERY...



YOU STUDENTS  
WILL FIND THIS NEW  
DISCOVERY OF  
SPECIAL INTEREST...

...THIS LIVE BATTERY  
IS ATTACHED TO  
CERTAIN EXPOSED  
AREAS OF THE BODY  
...CAUSING A SEVERE  
ELECTRICAL SHOCK...

...IT HAS BEEN  
USED ON CASES  
MUCH LIKE THIS  
ONE WITH GREAT  
SUCCESS...



...ALTHOUGH IT APPEARS  
TO HAVE NO SUCCESSFUL  
RESULTS ON THIS  
OCCASION...

DOCTOR... SINCE  
THERE IS NO SIGN OF  
LIFE..MAY I MAKE A  
SMALL TEST OF MY OWN  
...ON THE PECTORAL  
MUSCLE...

YOU MAY--  
BUT DON'T EXPECT ANY  
RESULTS FROM A MERE CHEST  
MUSCLE...



GOOD LORD...

I... AMHH....  
HHEPHHH...I....

HE APPEARS ALIVE SIR...  
BUT HIS WORDS ARE  
COMPLETELY  
UNINTELLIGIBLE...



THIS ETHER IS BRINGING HIM  
AROUND...

... HE'S ALIVE GENTLEMEN...  
ALIVE!

THAT IS WHAT I TRIED TO  
SAY TO YOU DOCTOR... I SAID...  
'I AM ALIVE!'... COULD YOU  
NOT UNDERSTAND ME...



FOR THE LAST FIVE DAYS I'VE BEEN COMPLETELY  
ALIVE AND AWARE OF WHAT WAS GOING ON  
AROUND ME... I TRIED TO MOVE... TO SPEAK...  
BUT I WAS HELPLESS...

...WHEN I WAS IN THE GRAVE I STRUGGLED  
TO MOVE THE LID AND THE EARTH... AND  
SUCCEEDED IN A SMALL DEGREE... BUT THEN  
I FAINTED AGAIN... AND WHEN I WAS BROUGHT  
HERE I KNEW I HAD TO SPEAK... BECAUSE I  
KNEW THAT NEXT YOU WOULD DISSECT ME  
IN A POST-MORTEM OPERATION!



BUT ENOUGH HISTORIES... I TELL THEM TO YOU ONLY AS PROOFS OF SUCH MAD OCCURRENCES... PERHAPS THE NEWSPAPERS QUOTED THOSE EXPERIENCES INCORRECTLY... WHO KNOWS?... I ONLY KNOW THAT THE GROTESQUE TALE THAT I TELL YOU NOW IS THE ABSOLUTE TRUTH...  
...I KNOW, BECAUSE IT HAPPENED TO ME...



LIKE THOSE OTHERS... I TOO AM FREQUENTLY SUBJECTED TO HORRIBLE ATTACKS OF CATALEPSY... FALLING SUDDENLY INTO DEATH-LIKE FAINTS WHERE TO ALL CONCERNED, EXCEPT ME, I APPEAR DEAD...



THANK GOD MY FRIENDS AND DOCTORS KNOW OF MY DREAD DISEASE... FOR IF NOT... I WOULD BE ALREADY BURIED! MY PERIODS HAVE LASTED WEEKS, MONTHS ON END... WHEN MY MIND RARELY SLEEPS... WHEN IT JUST WANDERS SADLY FROM NIGHTMARE TO NIGHTMARE...



...AND LET ME UNFOLD TO THEE THE GRAVES! IS THIS NOT A SPECTACLE OF WOE?-BEHOLD!



I LOOKED, AND THE UNSEEN FIGURE WHO GRASPED ME BY THE WRIST HAD CAUSED TO BE THROWN OPEN THE GRAVES OF ALL MANKIND...

**IT DID NOT TAKE ME LONG TO DECIDE THAT SOMETHING  
SERIOUS CONCERNING MY POSSIBLE AND ACCIDENTAL  
DEATH MUST BE DONE...**

...PRECAUTIONS MUST BE TAKEN WHILE THERE WAS A CHANCE... AND SO I INSTRUCTED WORKMEN TO SET ABOUT OUTFITTING MY FAMILY CRYPT WITH CERTAIN ESCAPES... SUCH AS A PROPER AIR VENT WITH WHICH I MIGHT BREATHE IN THE UNHAPPIEST OF CIRCUMSTANCES...



THIS SHOULD DO YEE SIR...  
IT'S A SPRING LOCK AND  
CAN EASILY BE OPENED  
FROM THE INSIDE!



I DON'T KNOW WHAT  
**POSSIBLE** REASON YOU  
CAN HAVE FOR WANTING  
A **BELL** IN A **TOMB**  
SIR...

...IT'S NONE  
OF YOUR BUSINESS...  
WHAT I DO AND WHY I  
DO IT IS MY OWN  
AFFAIR... I PAY YOU WELL  
TO DO YOUR WORK AND  
ASK ME NO QUESTIONS...

NOW AFIX THE **BELL** AS I  
HAVE **INSTRUCTED** AND LET  
THERE BE AN **END** TO YOUR  
WAGGING TONGUES!

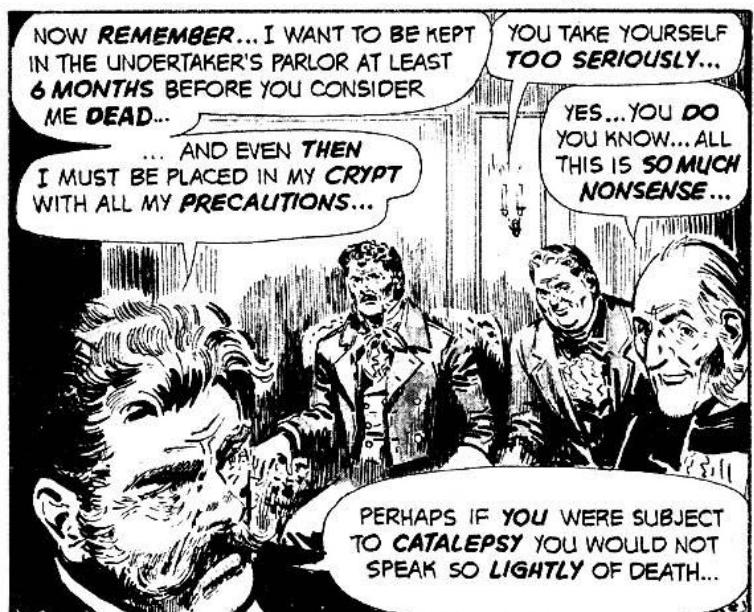


**NOW REMEMBER... I WANT TO BE KEPT  
IN THE UNDERTAKER'S PARLOR AT LEAST  
6 MONTHS BEFORE YOU CONSIDER  
ME DEAD...**

**YOU TAKE YOURSELF  
TOO SERIOUSLY...  
.**

... AND EVEN THEN  
I MUST BE PLACED IN MY CRYPT  
WITH ALL MY PRECAUTIONS...

YES...YOU DO  
YOU KNOW...ALL  
THIS IS SO MUCH  
NONSENSE...



A RELAXING TRIP DOWN  
THE RIVER WILL DO YOU A  
**WORLD OF GOOD...** GET  
YOUR MIND OFF DEATH  
AND YOUR INFATUATION  
WITH PREMATURE  
**BURIALS...**



THAT NIGHT, I REMEMBER, A VIOLENT STORM HIT US AND IT LOOKED AS IF THE SHIP WOULD SINK...



I WAS TOSSED ABOUT LIKE A FEATHER IN STORM  
WHOSE FURY HATED MY SOUL -- IT RIPPED AND  
TORE AT THE RIGGING AROUND ME--FLICKING  
ITS ANGRY TONGUE UNTIL AN OVERHANGING  
YARDARM STRUCK ME UPON THE BACK OF THE NECK...



I REMEMBER FALLING AND BEING HELPLESS...BUT  
BEFORE I LOST ALL MIND AND MATTER I FELT MYSELF  
BEING LIFTED BODILY FROM THE DECK AND BEING  
CARRIED ROUGHLY BY TWO SAILORS BELOW...



THE NEXT THING I REMEMBER I WAS AN ALL-CONSUMING  
BLACKNESS...

UUGHHH...  
MY HEAD... SWIMMING  
AROUND...

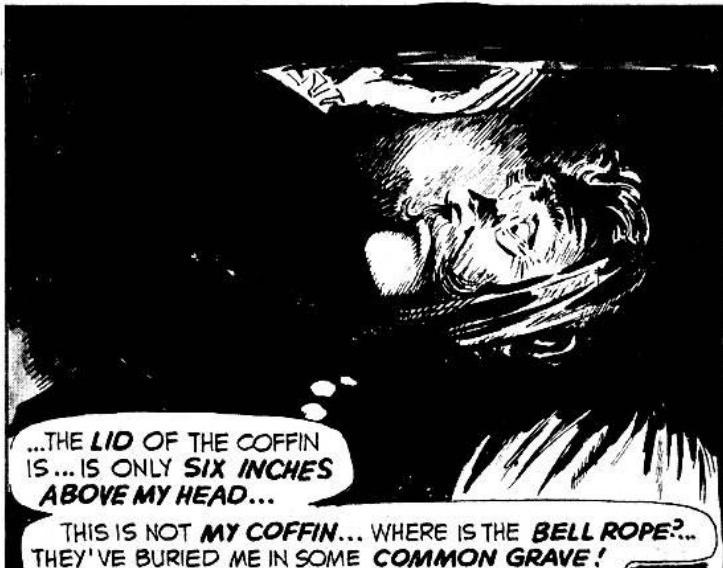
...WHERE AM I?...  
SO DARK... ONLY A  
SMALL LIGHT COMING  
FROM NOWHERE...



WHERE IN GOD'S HOLY  
ACRE CAN I BE?...I...

GOD ALMIGHTY!... CAN IT  
BE?... AM I DEAD? AM I BURIED?

MY HEAD... ALL BANDAGED  
UP... CAN'T OPEN MY MOUTH...  
BANDAGED UP WITH A CLOTH  
LIKE... LIKE IS DONE  
TO A CORPSE TO  
KEEP ITS MOUTH  
FROM FALLING  
OPEN!



CAN'T OPEN MY  
MOUTH... EVEN TO  
SCREAM...

DEAR HEAVENS...  
THEY THINK I'M  
DEAD...

I'M BURIED  
ALIVE!

...THE LID OF THE COFFIN  
IS... IS ONLY SIX INCHES  
ABOVE MY HEAD...

THIS IS NOT MY COFFIN... WHERE IS THE BELL ROPE?  
THEY'VE BURIED ME IN SOME COMMON GRAVE!



MY GOD I CAN'T MOVE... IT'S SO CRAMPED... GETTING HARD TO BREATHE!... AIR'S SO STIFLING HOT!

...MERCIFUL HEAVENS... THERE IS NO WAY OUT... I'M TRAPPED... BURIED UNDERGROUND... I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO DIG MYSELF OUT... NEVER... MUST RIP OFF BANDAGE... TO SCREAM...

HELP ME... SOMEONE IN GOD'S NAME HELP ME!

UGHHH... PLEASE... PLEASE... I'M NOT DEAD!...

LET ME OUT...  
LET ME OUT!

HILO... WHAT'S ALL THIS RACKET...

IT'S COMING FROM INSIDE... DO YOU THINK...

I'M SAVED... SAVED...

THEY HEAR ME... THEY'LL DIG ME OUT... THEY KNOW I'M ALIVE!

'ERE NOW... WHAT'S GOIN' ON... WHAT'S ALL THE SCREAMIN' ABOUT?

...BUT I...

YOU'VE 'AD A HARD KNOCK MISTER, WE KNOW, BUT NO NEED TO GO HOLLERIN' LIKE A BANSHEE... NO... NOT AT ALL...

I HAD BEEN ONLY THE VICTIM OF **MY OWN IMAGINATION**... FINDING MYSELF IN THAT TINY, **CRAMPED SPACE** I ASSUMED FROM MY FEARS THAT I WAS **DEAD**-- OR WAS **THOUGHT DEAD**... HOW FOOLISH I FELT WHEN THEY SWUNG THEIR **LANTERNS** TO REVEAL I WAS ONLY IN A **CRAMPED BUNK OF THE SHIP!** FOOLISH ENOUGH THAT FROM THAT MOMENT ONWARD I HAVE **BANISHED FROM MY MIND** ALL THOUGHTS OF **DEATH** AND **PREMATURE INTERMENT**... NOW I AM A **HAPPY MAN**... LIVING LIFE AS IT SHOULD BE LIVED... AND NEVER AGAIN WILL I WORRY OVER STRANGE FATES THAT MIGHT **BEFALL ME**... FOR WHATEVER WILL -- WILL BE **MY END!**

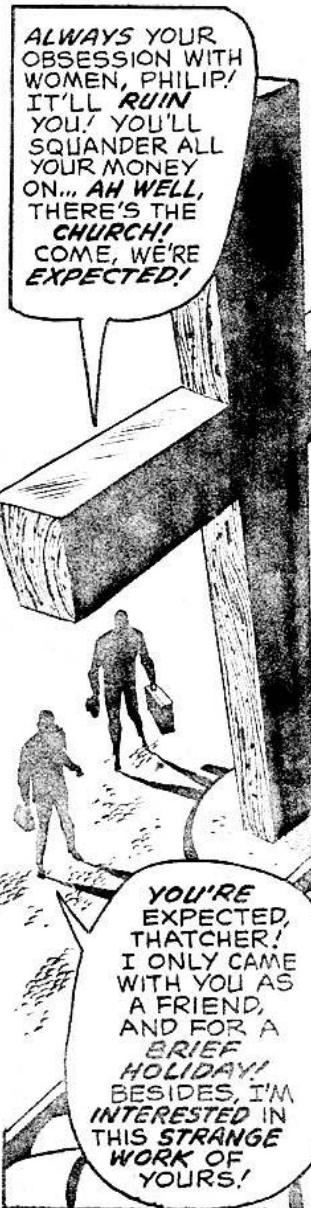


"...HOLES LEADING  
UNDER THE ALTER,  
WHERE THE RICH BLOOD  
DRIPS INTO TWO  
GOLDEN GOBLETS  
SOON BRIMMING  
WITH IT!"

"BLOOD! IT IS OURS...  
TO DRINK! AT LAST!"



SEVERAL WEEKS LATER...



IN THE PRIVACY OF FATHER BROOKE'S STUDY...

I GLAD YOU ARRIVED IN ANSWER TO MY LETTER SO SOON, GLEN THATCHER! FOR WHAT I WROTE YOU SOUNDS INCREDIBLE, BUT IT IS THE TRUTH! GREYWOOD IS AT THE MERCY OF A CULT OF VAMPIRES... WHO PRACTICE THE RELIGION OF THE UNDEAD!

THE TOOLS OF MY TRADE! SHARP WOODEN STAKES, POWERFUL TRAPS WHICH NOTHING HUMAN OR INHUMAN COULD ESCAPE...

GOOD LORD! YOU'RE REALLY SERIOUS! YOUR BUSINESS IS KILLING VAMPIRES!

A RARE PROFESSION, MY SON...

THE GREYWOOD COVEN SACRIFICE TO THE BLOOD-GODDESS KOTH EACH NIGHT! DAILY WE DISCOVER DICAPITED CORPSES DRAINED OF BLOOD! THE WORSHIPPERS ARE LED BY AN UNDEAD BEAUTY NAMED MARISA! THAT'S ALL I'VE LEARNED, THATCHER!

I BELIEVE YOU, FATHER! YOU FORGET I HAVE MADE THE EXTERMINATION OF THESE VERMIN MY PROFESSION. GIVE ME ALL THE INFORMATION YOU HAVE ON THE VAMPIRES, AND I'LL DESTROY THEM WITH THE CONTENTS OF THIS BAG!

WHY ARE YOU TWO SPEWING SUCH NONSENSE ABOUT A FOOLISH LEGEND? AND... WHAT'S INSIDE THAT MYSTERIOUS BAG OF YOURS?

...BUT ONE GREYWOOD HAS NEED OF!

I-I'LL INFORM THE VILLAGERS! WE SHALL PAY YOU ALL WE HAVE!

I'VE HEARD ENOUGH! I'M LEAVING!

I DIDN'T SUSPECT THIS TO BE YOUR LINE OF WORK, THATCHER! PREYING ON THE SUPERSTITIONS OF VILLAGERS FOR MONEY...

NIGHT FALLS COATING THE TOWN IN STYGIAN BLACKNESS... AND WITH IT COMES A MOCKING CHILL WHICH PENETRATES THE VERY WALLS OF THE INN... AND THOSE WITHIN!

HEE-HEE! THANK YE GENTLEMEN

TAKE MY BAG TO OUR ROOM, PHILIP! I'M GOING TO TAKE A LOOK ABOUT THE TOWN!

BUT IT'S SO DARK..? OH, ALL RIGHT!

BAH! GREYWOOD SEEMS LIKE JUST ANOTHER DULL TOWN, NO MATTER WHAT IDIOTY THATCHER SPOUTS OF VAMPIRES! WORSE, I HAVE NOT SEEN ONE GIRL IN THE VILLAGE WORTH MY COMPANY... EH?

KNOCK!  
KNOCK!

PARDON, YOUNG SIR! I'VE BEEN ASKED T' INFORM YE THAT A CERT'N YOUNG LADY WISHES T' SEE YE IN THIS ROOM ALONE! MIGHT I SEND 'ER UP?

MY PRAYERS HAVE BEEN ANSWERED!

PLEASE DO, MY DEAR INNKEEPER! AND I WOULD PAY YOU WELL FOR A BOTTLE OF FINE WINE!

ANXIOUS SECONDS CRAWL BY, THEN...

PHILIP WESTON? GOOD EVENING! I HOPE YOU FORGIVE MY BARGING IN ON YOU IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT! I'VE BROUGHT YOUR WINE!

YOU'RE BEAUTI... I MEAN... ERR... THANK YOU! WHAT WAS THE... REASON FOR YOUR SEEING ME, AGAIN?

BLAST IT, PHILIP! CAN'T YOU SEE HOW DEADLY SERIOUS I AM? A CULT OF VAMPIRES EXISTS HERE, AND I MUST DESTROY IT! NOW LET US GET SETTLED AT AN INN DISSK APPROACHES!



THATCHER STARES HARD INTO THE EYES OF FATHER BROOKE! EYES NOW DEAD, YET BURNING WITH INHUMAN FURY AND BLOOD LUST!





"I-I HEARD 'EM  
WHISPER OF...TH' OLD  
CRAGMORE ESTATE...  
ON TH' EDGE O' TOWN!  
FOLKS SAY IT'S...  
HAUNTED!"

THIS LOOKS LIKE IT!  
PHILIP MUST BE  
INSIDE! HOPE THE  
SACRIFICIAL RITES  
HAVEN'T BEGUN YET!  
GLAD I BOUGHT MY  
BAG! I'LL MAKE  
SOME PRECAUTIONS  
BEFORE I GO IN!

THATCHER EXPLORES THE MANSION, THEN  
DESCENDS A GLOOMY STAIRCASE TO THE  
CELLAR... DISCOVERING SIX OPEN  
COFFINS WHICH REVEAL THE CORPSES  
OF THE UNDEAD!

THE GREYWOOD  
COVEN! LYING  
WHERE NO SUN-  
LIGHT CAN REACH  
THEM! IN SOME KIND  
OF TRANCE, I'LL  
DESTROY THEM ONCE  
I FREE PHILIP!

THERE'S  
A ROOM  
JUST  
BEYOND!  
MAYBE  
PHILIP'S  
BEING  
KEPT IN  
THERE!  
I PRAY  
HE'S  
UNHARMED!



THATCHER'S MINE IS  
NUMBED BY THE  
GRUESOME TABLEAU  
SHOWN HIM BY  
FLICKERING CANDLE-  
LIGHT...



RECOILING AT THE GRISLY HORROR  
OF THE SACRIFICIAL ROOM, THATCHER  
REACTS WITH MANIACAL REVENGE!



THUS BEGINS AN ORGY OF BLOOD, DEATH, AND SLAUGHTER!



THE AIR IS GHOSTLY SILENCE AS  
THE VAMPIRESS FACES HER  
ENRAGED HUNTER BEFORE THE  
FRONT DOOR OF THE MANSION...

A PRIESTESS  
LEAVES ONLY BY  
A FRONT DOOR,  
THATCHER! IT IS  
STILL DARK OUT!  
THERE IS PLENTY  
OF TIME FOR ME  
TO REACH MY  
COFFIN HIDDEN  
IN THE WOODS!





THATCHER'S DAZED, FADING SENSES MAKE HIM SEE THE STAKE JUTTING FROM HIS BLEEDING BODY! MAKE HIM HEAR MOCKING, FEMALE LAUGHTER...



THE VAMPIRESS' SHRILL, PANICKY VOICE THREATENS... ORDERS... FINALLY PLEADS! BUT, AS ALWAYS, THERE IS NO HOPE OF AN ANSWER FROM A DEAD MAN!



AND THE DAWN, WITH IT'S BRIGHTLY AWAKENING SUNLIGHT, WAS NOT LONG IN COMING...



THE END

...TURN NOW TO THE YEAR 1931  
FOR THE PROLOGUE: I AM DEAD:  
I AM BURIED!

...THIS FETID PLACE IS SOMEWHERE  
IN ARKANSAS...IT IS A PRISON...  
OR, AT LEAST, PART OF A PRISON;  
THIS DEATH INFESTED SWAMP IS THE  
PRISON WALL...

...THE MAN IS ED WARTON...THAT WAS HIS NAME...TILL  
THEY TOOK IT AWAY FROM HIM...GAVE HIM A NUMBER...



...ED WARTON IS ATTEMPTING TO ESCAPE THIS RIDICULOUS PLACE WHERE MANY LIKE HE ARE SHUT AWAY FOR LIFE...FOR AN ETERNITY-- AWAY FROM LIFE...TO WHICH HE NOW TRIES TO RETURN...THROUGH THIS LUNATIC WALL... WHOSE VERY STONE BRICKS ARE ALIVE AND GRIP AND GRAB HIS LEGS, RIP AND TEAR AT HIS ARMS, RETARD HIS EVERY STRUGGLE TO EVEN BREATHE...



... ALL PROBLEMS THAT ED WARTON DOESN'T HAVE FOR LONG...

...YOU  
MOVE AN INCH  
AN' AH'LL  
BLOW OFF YER  
HEAD...

FREEZE  
WARTON

...CALL YER  
BEAST OFFA  
ME MUNDY...

...I AIN'T  
GOIN' NOWHERE  
...I HADDIT...

...I  
HADDIT...

...AND SO STARTS OUR TALE ...



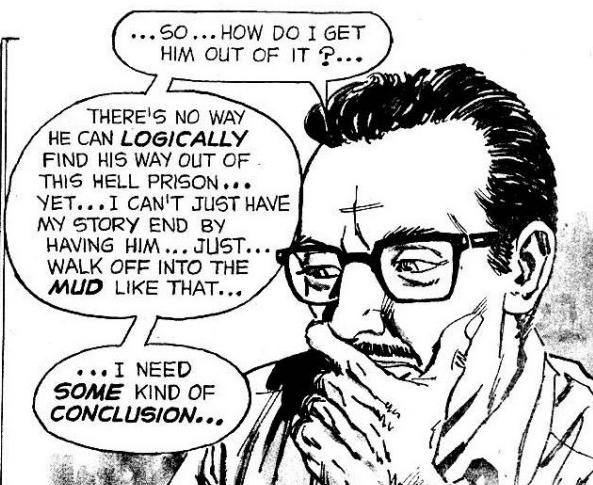




... THE SWAMP BOAT SLIDES OUT INTO THE WALL ...



... ON THE FIFTH DAY OF ITS JUNKET THE BOAT WANDERS INTO A GROTESQUE CLUMP OF MUD... UNDERNEATH A SULLEN, SLOW TURBULENCE SHIFTS THE WATERS AWKWARDLY AND TWIST AND ROCK THE SWAMP CRAFT TILL IT BEGINS TO TIP...



... AIMLESSLY... SEARCHING...

... THE THING IN IT STANDS AT THE PROW STARING THRU NO-DIMENSIONAL EYES THAT GLIMMER AS THEY THREATEN TO FALL HELPLESSLY FROM THEIR FETID SOCKETS... FOR HOURS TURN INTO DAYS... AND THE THING IS STARTING TO DETERIORATE.

... FLESH BEGINS TO DROP OFF... SLIDE DOWN ONTO THE BOTTOM OF THE BOAT... COLLECT INTO A HORRID PUDDLE... BUT THE BOAT STILL SLIDES THROUGH THE SWAMP... SEARCHING FOR AN EXIT...

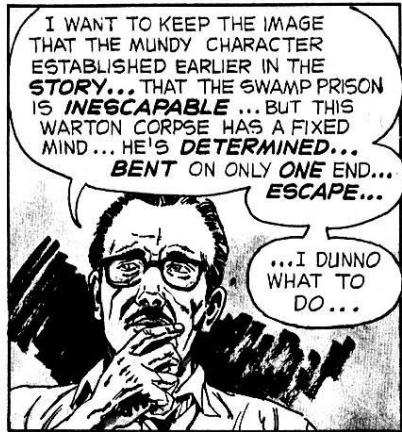
... AND WHEN THE LONG-LIFELESS CONTENTS OF THE BOAT SPILL OUT INTO THE SOUP THEY STRUGGLE WITH THE GATOR... OBSESSED WITH ONLY ONE GOAL THE MAD MIND CONTINUES TO FIGHT WITH A NOW POINTLESS PURPOSE... ESCAPE...

... GOTTA GET OUTTA THIS PRISON... NOT EVEN YOU GONNA STOP ME...

... SO... HOW DO I GET HIM OUT OF IT?...

THERE'S NO WAY HE CAN LOGICALLY FIND HIS WAY OUT OF THIS HELL PRISON... YET... I CAN'T JUST HAVE MY STORY END BY HAVING HIM... JUST... WALK OFF INTO THE MUD LIKE THAT...

... I NEED SOME KIND OF CONCLUSION...



...WARTON IS DEAD...BUT NOT YET BURIED...

MUNDY...  
MUNDY...HE'S  
DEAD...

...AWFUL DAMNED  
STINK COMIN' UP FROM  
THERE...HE'S ROTTED  
FER 2 DAYS...

...OH GOD IT  
AIN'T FAIR...  
HOW'S AH SUPPOSED  
TO KNOW HE US  
GONNA LAY DOWN  
AND DIE?

...OH GOD...  
WELL, HAUL HIM  
UP...

...MUNDY...  
WHUT IS THIS?

HE'S DEAD BUT...  
BUT WHO'S THESE OTHER  
TWO CORPSES HE'AR?  
CORPSE OF SOME GUY IN  
STRANGE CLOTHES...AN SOME  
KID...WE MUSTA BURIED THEM  
ALIVE WITH WARTON...BUT  
WHO KIN THEY BE MUNDY?  
WHO KIN THEY BE?...

...AH  
DON'T REALLY  
CARE...

...THROW 'EM  
BACK IN THE  
PIT...BURY  
'EM...

...THIS FETID PLACE IS SOMEWHERE IN ARKANSAS...  
IT IS A PRISON...AND ALL WHO ENTER, FOR WHATEVER  
REASONS, ARE FOREVER DENIED THE RIGHT TO LIFE...  
LIBERTY...OR THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS...AND  
SINCE YOU ENTERED HERE TOO...THAT MEANS...  
...YOU TOO ARE DEAD...

R.I.P.:HEH HEH HEH:

THE UNABATING STORM THRASHES A LANDSCAPE OF COWERING FOLIAGE AS, INCONGRUOUSLY, A DESPERATE FRANK TANNER FRANTICALLY PURSUES A FLEEING WRAITHLIKE FIGURE...

BARBARA! STOP,  
PLEASE! YOU'LL  
CATCH PNEUMONIA--  
DIE...

PLEASE -- COME BACK,  
BARBARA! YOU CAN'T DIE  
NOW... NOT WHEN WE'VE  
JUST FOUND EACH  
OTHER...

# THE NIGHT OF THE CORPSE-BRIDE

FRANK TANNER'S STRIDENT PLEAS ARE ABRUPTLY CHOKED OFF BY THE CORRUSCATING FLARE OF BERSERK LIGHTNING, AND JAGGED FINGERS OF CAPRICIOUS FATE DESCEND FROM THE ROILING FIRMAMENT TO TOY WITH THE DESTINIES OF MORTALS...

SHRACK--BOOOM!

MY GOD--!  
BARBARA! SHE CAN'T  
DIE NOW! SHE CAN'T--  
DO YOU HEAR ME,  
BARBARA? I WON'T  
LET YOU DIE!

MOONACH  
AND ULANDUA

THE GIRL, ATINY SPLASH OF VIRGIN WHITE IN THE DISTANCE, FALTERS BUT A MOMENT--AND RESUMES HER HEADLONG MADFLIGHT THROUGH THE LASHING STORM...

PHINEAS TANNER'S LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT, LIKE SO MANY OTHERS, HAD BEEN ANNOUNCED BY AN UNCONCERNED EXECUTOR, WITHIN THE SOLEMNLY AUSTERE CONFINES OF AN OAK-PALEED OFFICE... WHILE FORMER FRIENDS AND RELATIVES OF THE DECEASED ASSUMED THE ASPECTS OF IMPATIENT VULTURES...

SHE'S ALL RIGHT! THE LIGHTNING MISSED HER! BUT STILL SHE FLEES -- HOW I CURSE UNCLE PHINEAS AND HIS BEDAMMED LAST TESTAMENT...

AND TO MY NEPHEW, FRANK TANNER, I BEQUEATH THE BULK OF MY FORTUNE, FIVE MILLION DOLLARS IN NEGOTIABLE BONDS, UPON COMPLIANCE WITH THIS STIPULATION: THAT HE MARRY BEFORE MIDNIGHT OF THE THIRD DAY FOLLOWING THE READING OF THIS WILL...

WELL, COUSIN,  
LOOKS LIKE YOU  
HIT THE JACKPOT.  
CONGRATULATIONS!

THANKS, JOHN. BUT I CAN'T UNDERSTAND WHY UNCLE PHINEAS WOULD LEAVE HIS FORTUNE TO ME... I SAW HIM ONLY ONCE -- AS A CHILD. THE ONLY THING I REMEMBER IS THAT HE SEEMED TO LOATH ME.

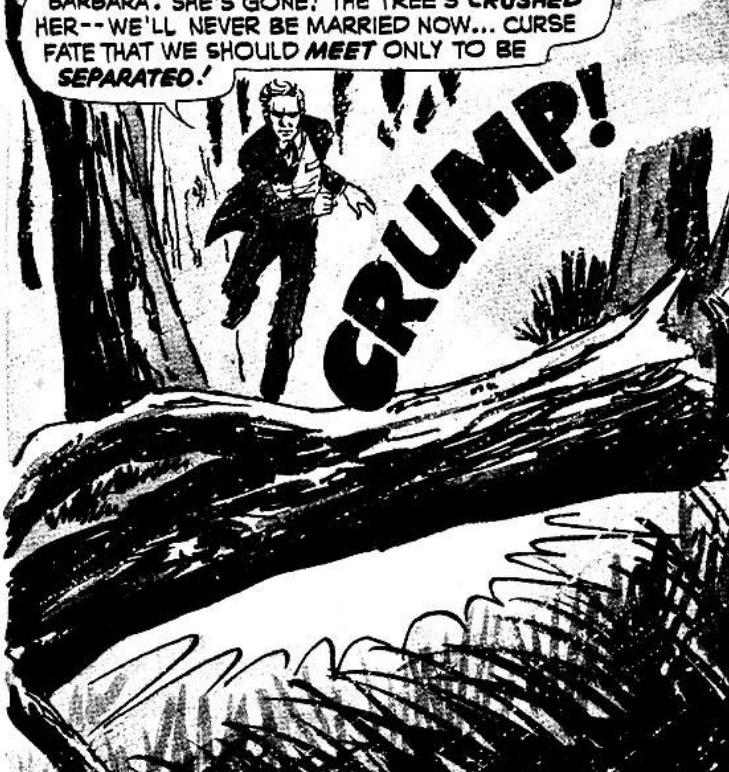
WELL, HIS WIFE DIED ON THEIR WEDDING NIGHT AND MILLIONAIRES HAVE A PROCLIVITY FOR ECCENTRICITY ANYWAY, FRANK. I GUESS DEAR UNCLE WAS NO EXCEPTION. HAVE YOU A GIRLFRIEND IN MIND FOR THE PROSPECTIVE -- AND EMINENTLY LUCKY -- BRIDE?

NO... I DON'T. I IMAGINE I'LL FORFEIT THE MONEY-- UNLESS I CAN FIND SOMEONE TO AGREE TO MARRIAGE WITHIN THREE DAYS. HARDLY LIKELY... UNLESS...



THOUGHTS OF THE PAST ABRUPTLY VANISH AS THE THUNDER PLAYS A HORRIBLE CANTATA, STRIKING A DISSONANT CHORD UPON AN ANCIENT TREE -- CHIPS OF FLAMING BARK ERUPT FROM THE ASSAULTED TRUNK ...

AND SLOWLY, AS IF IN ARRESTED MOTION, THE PONDEROUS TREE TOPPLES FORWARD AND CRASHES DOWN, SOUNDING THE CONCLUSIVE DRUM BEAT OF AN APPARENT DEATH LITURGY...



BARBARA! SHE'S GONE! THE TREE'S CRUSHED HER -- WE'LL NEVER BE MARRIED NOW... CURSE FATE THAT WE SHOULD MEET ONLY TO BE SEPARATED!

THEY MET, AS SO MANY PEOPLE DO, ON THE STREET, AMIDST THE BUSTLE OF SO MANY OTHERS TOO PREOCCUPIED WITH PETTY AFFAIRS TO CHANCE SUCH A MEETING...

WELL, FRANK, I SUPPOSE THERE **WOULD** BE A NUMBER OF GIRLS WILLING TO MARRY YOU, SPLIT THE INHERITANCE, AND THEN DIVORCE YOU -- IF YOU'RE SURE THAT'S WHAT YOU WANT...

I WANT THE **MONEY** -- AND ANY MARRIAGE ENTERED INTO AFTER ONLY THREE DAYS OF ACQUAINTANCE IS BOUND TO END UP IN DIVORCE ANYWAY!

I SUPPOSE THERE'S ENOUGH TRUTH IN THAT. WELL, GOOD LUCK... SAY, HERE COMES A LIKELY CANDIDATE...

YOU MAY BE JOKING, JOHN, BUT YOU DON'T KNOW HOW RIGHT YOU ARE! I'LL SEE YOU -- PROBABLY THE NEXT TIME A RELATIVE DIES.

EXCUSE ME. YOU LOOK LIKE A YOUNG WOMAN WHO MIGHT ENJOY A NOVEL DIVERSION ON SUCH A LAZY DAY. I'VE JUST HAD THE MOST MARVELOUS TATTOO AFFIXED TO MY BODY; WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE WHERE?

WELL, I DON'T USUALLY... ALL RIGHT, WHERE DID YOU HAVE THIS MARVELOUS TATTOO AFFIXED?

IN A TAVERN JUST DOWN THE STREET; COME ON, I'LL SHOW YOU. BY THE WAY, WHAT'S YOUR NAME?

BARBARA JENNINGS. AND TELL ME, HOW LONG DID IT TAKE TO PERFECT THAT LINE?

THE LIGHTS WERE LOW, THE FOOD SUCCULENT, THE WINE LIGHT AND DRY, AND THE TALK SHALLOW BUT ENJOYABLE... UNTIL FRANK'S THOUGHTS RETURNED TO THE PURPOSE AT HAND...

I REALLY **DID** HAVE REASON FOR STOPPING YOU. YOU SEE, BARBARA, I'M GOING TO INHERIT A CONSIDERABLE SUM OF MONEY AND...

PLEASE DON'T START TALKING ABOUT MONEY! I'VE HAD A BAD EXPERIENCE WITH ANOTHER MAN, A MAN OBSESSED WITH HIS MONEY... IN FACT, WE WERE MARRIED -- BUT THAT WAS ALL IN THE PAST. PLEASE DON'T THINK ME CRASS -- IT'S JUST THAT I'VE HEARD ENOUGH ABOUT MONEY TO LAST ME **TWO** LIFETIMES.

BARBARA'S TERSE DISCLAIMER LEFT FRANK NO CHOICE BUT TO ABANDON THE NARRATION OF HIS PLAN. HE DEBATED LEAVING HER IN FAVOR OF SEEKING ANOTHER GIRL WITH MORE MERCENARY INCLINATIONS, BUT ABANDONED THAT THOUGHT ALSO, FINDING HIMSELF GENUINELY ATTRACTED TO THIS GIRL WITH THE SPARKLING EYES...

VERY WELL. THEN SHALL WE GO FOR A RIDE IN THE COUNTRY...?

EXCELLENT PROPOSAL -- NOW THAT I'VE SEEN WHERE YOUR MARVELOUS TATTOO WAS AFFIXED.

THE INCESSANT DOWNPOUR QUENCHES THE POSSIBILITY OF FIRE FROM THE STRICKEN TREE... AND THE FIRE IN FRANK TANNER'S BREAST IS ALSO QUENCHED, BY THE DISCOVERY THAT...

DISTRAUGHT, SEARCHING EYES SQUINT THROUGH THE DRENCHING SLUICE OF RAIN, ANXIALLY PEERING INTO THE CLUSTERED TREES FOR A SIGN OF HIS FORMER BRIDE-TO-BE -- A SIGN MUCH LIKE THE FLITTING GLIMER OF WHITE WHICH DASHES ERRATICALLY THROUGH THE FOREST AHEAD...

RELENTLESSLY, HEADLESS OF THE SHARP BRANCHES WHICH GROPE AND SCRAPE AT HIM, FRANK TANNER PURSUDES THE RECEDING FIGURE IN WHITE... HIS THOUGHTS ONCE AGAIN RELIVING PAST EVENTS...

WHY DID IT HAVE TO GO WRONG? WHY CAN'T SHE BE WILLING NOW-- LIKE SHE WAS IN THE CARRIAGE THE DAY WE MET...?

SHE WASN'T CAUGHT UNDER THE TREE! SHE'S STILL ALIVE THEN! BUT... WHERE?

THERE!  
BARBARA --  
STOP! WE MUST  
BE MARRIED!  
WE MUST--!

SHE HAD BEEN WILLING LIKE SO FEW GIRLS WOULD BE, IN A CARRIAGE IN THE COUNTRY WITH THE BIRDS VOICING THEIR SHEER JOY TO BE ALIVE ON SUCH A GOLDEN DAY...

YOU MEAN YOU WILL MARRY ME? EVEN THOUGH WE JUST MET? YOU'LL MARRY ME RIGHT AWAY?

WELL, I'LL NEED A DAY TO GET A GOWN AND MAKE THE OTHER ARRANGEMENTS... BUT, YES, I WILL MARRY YOU -- THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW.

THAT'LL BE THE THIRD DAY -- JUST IN TIME TO FULFILL THE WILL'S STIPULATION.

THAT'S TERRIFIC -- PERFECT! BUT... BUT YOU KNOW SO LITTLE ABOUT ME...

AND THEN HE IS RUNNING AGAIN, FEET HAMMERING LIKE UNTIRING PISTONS, FACE DRIVING INTO THE PELTING STING OF STEADY RAIN, HIS ELUSIVE QUARRY SWIFTLY APPROACHING...

I KNOW ALL I NEED KNOW. YOU'RE KIND AND GENTLE, SO MUCH LIKE MY EX-HUSBAND -- AND IF YOU'LL REFRAIN FROM TALKING ANY MORE ABOUT MONEY, I'M CERTAIN WE'LL BE VERY HAPPY... DARLING.

THE ROAD!  
BARBARA, STOP!  
THE ROAD'S AHEAD!  
THERE'RE AUTOS ON THAT ROAD--!

HELPLESS, HE GAPES WITH THROAT-THICKENED TERROR AS THE GIRL BOLTS ACROSS THE ROAD, A BLUR OF WHITE, SOON TO INTERSECT WITH ANOTHER, METALLIC BLUR-- A CAREENING AUTO, UNABLE TO HALT ON THE RAIN-SLICK ROAD...

BARBARA! DON'T-- YOU'LL KILL YOURSELF! YOU CAN'T DIE NOW-- NOT NOW!

THE PROGRESS OF THE AUTO IS RELENTLESS, THE SUBSEQUENT IMPACT IS INEXORABLE-- A SICKENING THUD OF IMPLACABLE METAL AGAINST ALL TOO PLIABLE FLESH AND BONES...

AND AGAIN HIS CHURNING THOUGHTS REGRESS--BACK TO THE FINAL STAGE OF EVENTS RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS INEFABLE TRAGEDY...

NO! SHE CAN'T DIE NOW! SHE CAN'T BE DEAD--!

THE SUPERSTITION HAD BEEN BROKEN, LIKE SO MANY OTHERS, WITHOUT SO MUCH AS A CURSORY CONTEMPLATION OF THE IMMINENT CONSEQUENCES...

FRANK-- YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO SEE ME UNTIL THE CEREMONY BEGINS! IT'S BAD LUCK...

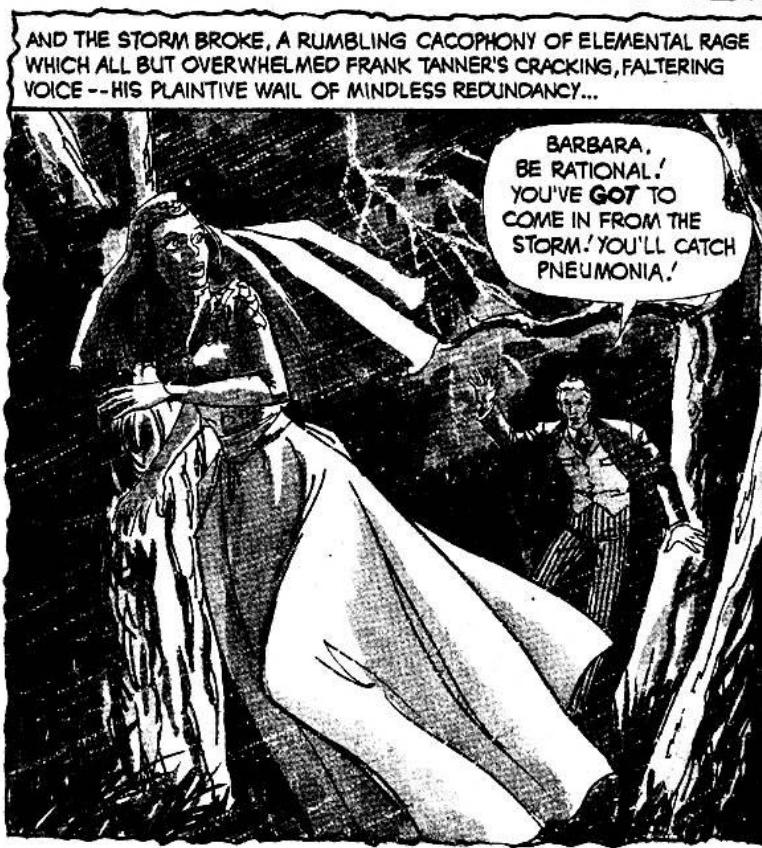
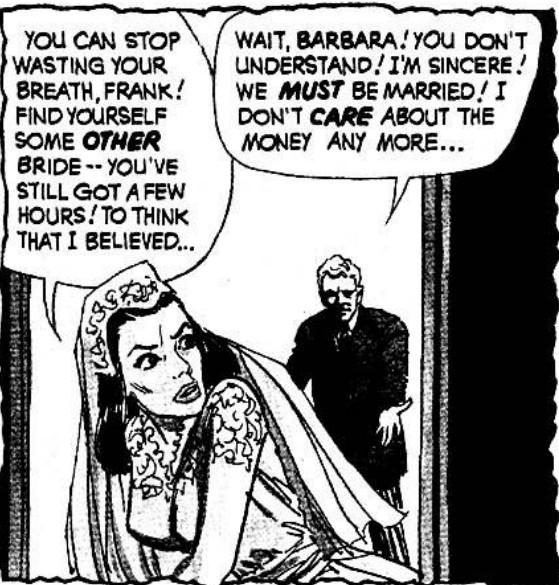
LOOK, BARBARA, FORGET THAT FOOLISHNESS! I'VE GOT TO TELL YOU SOMETHING... YOU MUST HAVE WONDERED WHY I WANTED US TO GET MARRIED SO BADLY THAT I SETTLED FOR AN EVENING CEREMONY... IT HAD TO BE TODAY...

YOU DON'T HAVE TO EXPLAIN, DARLING. THERE WERE CEREMONIES ALL DAY TODAY-- WE ASKED TO BE MARRIED SO SUDDENLY THAT THE MINISTER COULD ONLY ACCOMMODATE US TONIGHT...

THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEAN, BARBARA! THERE'S A REASON WHY WE COULDN'T WAIT UNTIL TOMORROW. IF I'M MARRIED BEFORE MIDNIGHT TONIGHT I RECEIVE AN INHERITANCE OF FIVE MILLION DOLLARS...

MONEY! THAT'S ALL YOU'RE MARRYING ME FOR-- JUST SO YOU CAN RECEIVE SOME INHERITANCE! AND I THOUGHT IT WAS SOMETHING SPECIAL-- SOMETHING ABOVE ORDINARY LOVE, SOMETHING TIMELESS, WHERE IT DIDN'T MATTER HOW LONG WE KNEW EACH OTHER--!

NO, WAIT, BARBARA! THAT'S NOT IT-- I WAS CIRCUMSPECT AT FIRST BUT NOT ANY MORE! NOW I'M THANKFUL FOR UNCLE PHINEAS' CRAZY STIPULATION-- I WOULD NEVER HAVE MET YOU IF I WASN'T TRYING TO MEET SOMEONE RIGHT AWAY! BUT IT IS SPECIAL, BARBARA! I DO LOVE YOU...



...ULTIMATELY LEADING BACK TO THE CHURCHYARD AND ITS FORLORN HARVEST OF MUTE GRAVESTONES...

BARBARA! COME BACK! YOU'LL SLIP IN THE MUD--HURT YOURSELF ON ONE OF THE HEADSTONES--!

THE PURSUIT ENDS WITH THE CRUMPLING OF A FRAIL WHITE FIGURE, VIRGIN WEDDING GOWN SOILED IN COMMUNION WITH A GRAVE...

BARBARA!  
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?  
GOT TO GET YOU IN  
FROM THE STORM--!

FRANK...  
YOU'RE ... SO  
MUCH... LIKE MY  
... FIRST  
HUSBAND...

HEART THREATENING TO BURST FROM PROLONGED EXHAUSTION, FRANK TANNER FINALLY REACHES HIS ESTRANGED BRIDE-TO-BE, AND THE PECULIAR APPREHENSIVENESS RESERVED FOR THE DISCOVERY OF ANOMALY THICKENS HIS THROAT WITH HOARSE DREAD...

HIS FINGERS QUAVERING WITH TREPIDATION, HE TURNS THE FRAGILE BODY--THE FRAGILE BODY OF A DESSICATED, MOLDERING CORPSE... THE LIVID COUNTENANCE OF DEATH LONG-DEAD...

GOOD,  
LORD!  
NO!

AND THE CHURCH BELL TOLLS THE HOUR OF MIDNIGHT, MOURNFULLY...

1860

BARBARA  
ENNINGS  
TANNER

TANNER,  
BELIEVED WIFE OF  
PHINEAS TANNER  
WHO DIED ON HER  
WEDDING NIGHT

IMPOSSIBLE  
--IT JUST  
CAN'T BE--!



**NIGHTMARE #12** is the **SWAMP ISSUE** . . . inside this weird-fat-bloated-awful bundle of HORROR are an exciting number of things going on in **SWAMPS** . . . in the cover story **I AM DEAD: I AM BURIED** there is a man-macabre trying to constantly get OUT of a **SWAMP** . . . in the **ASSASSIN-BUG** there's a guy who BURIES HIS BENT-BRAIN in a **SWAMP** . . . all kinda stuff like that going on in **SWAMPS** this issue . . . which is why this **LETTERS-EDITORIAL PAGE** is

. . . this . . . is getting EXCITING . . . so MANY people out there responded to the **BUNCH OF QUESTIONS** we placed in **NIGHTMARE #10** that we're STILL being flooded DAILY with your comments, suggestions and ideas . . . and the NICE thing about it is the occasional COMPLIMENTS we get . . . like BOB BURROS of Ridgewood, New York, (who was one of the winners of **THE HORROR-MOOD GAR-GOYLE EGG CONTEST** as announced in **THE 1973 NIGHTMARE WINTER-SPECIAL ISSUE** now on sale . . . heh heh . . .) who writes . . . "your GAR-GOYLE plot is pure genius and great prose" . . . and another nice compliment from ELWIN WOOD of Elmira, New York, who writes . . . "thank you . . . thank you . . . thank you for bringing the HEAP back . . . I enjoy his adventures VERY MUCH" . . .

. . . this issue we're going to feature some MORE of your **BUNCH OF ANSWERS** like we started to do in **PSYCHO #11** . . .

. . . but before we do, we wanna say TWO THINGS . . .  
1 . . . thank YOU for your response; often complimentary, sometimes critical, but ALWAYS WELCOME . . . and ALWAYS READ . . . but please don't wait till we publish **A BIGGER BUNCH OF QUESTIONS** (which'll be NEXT issue, not THIS one as earlier announced), write us a letter, note, or postcard! COMMENT . . . it is YOU you help . . .

2 . . . this is where we are extremely proud to OFFICIALLY ANNOUNCE the AWESOME BIRTH of our (bi-monthly) 3rd title . . . and you wanna know the NAME . . . right? . . . if we told you, you'd . . .

. . . SCREAM . . .

. . . it'll be on sale early this spring, and will feature ALL NEW stories and art expressly prepared for each issue, by only our TOP MOOD-TEAM MEMBERS . . . miss it not . . .

. . . now onto your letters . . .

. . . Scott Cassman, age 20, writes . . . "the cover is just as important as the rest of the magazine and a minimum of copy is always appreciated, especially when the cover art is really good" . . .

. . . many readers like Scott say NAY to cover copy, many say YAY . . . so we gotta problem!! . . . But we also gotta SOLUTION . . . SOME covers will have lotsa copy, SOME will have practically NONE . . . what that SOLVES I DUNNO but at least there's a 100 percent of something for everybody 50 percent of the time, or there's 50 percent of something for 100 percent of you one-eighth of the time, except on Thursdays when it's snowing!! . . .

. . . Richard Farmer, 28, writes: ". . . the cover usually attacks me" . . .

. . . the **SKYWALD PUBLISHING CORPORATION**, its publishers, editors, legal counsel, and all others around here, refuse to be held responsible for covers that attack readers. The wholesaler is responsible, the candy-store owner who sold you the magazine . . . the printer maybe . . . BUT NOT US . . .

. . . Pete Maestas, 28, writes: ". . . the cover should represent the inside material . . ."

. . . we try very hard to do this, I don't think we've ever messed up with covers, Pete . . . sometimes we have stated in these **LETTERS PAGES** that something is 'coming up' in such and such an issue and, well for one reason or another, we couldn't swing-it . . . ALL material I've mentioned in these letters pages will appear . . . but if it doesn't appear in the issue I've suggested don't worry, it'll be printed in the NEXT ONE for SURE . . .



## . . . A sweet-sour swamp of screaming scrawlings . . .

. . . heh heh . . .

. . . Bill Krenzelok of Arkansas, 18, writes: ". . . the cover artist who beats 'em ALL is **KEN KELLY** . . ."

. . . we've signed Krazy Ken Kelly to do LOTS of covers for us . . . he rated the **BEST-IN-THE-BOOKS** by FAR in the

POLL and this means only **ONE THING** . . . more **KEN KELLY** for YOU . . . imminently, he appears in **'THE 1973 NIGHTMARE WINTER SPECIAL'** . . . and he's workin' on OTHERS right now . . . like one called: **'THE OLD VAMPIRE LADY'** which is **LUNATIC** . . .



**ANNOUNCING**

. . . a very special photo feature in the next **NIGHTMARE** on sale next month . . . double movie review of **WILLARD** and **BEN** . . . we recommend these 2 excellent films and we recommend you see this spectacular 5 page scream screen movie review . . . it takes you **BEHIND THE SCENES** . . .



**BEN** . . . JOSEPH CAMPANELLA ARTHUR O'CONNELL MEREDITH BAXTER  
CINERAMA RELEASING CORPORATION  
Lee Harcourt MONTGOMERY Danny GILBERT A. RALSTON STEPHEN GILBERT  
DON BLACK WALTER SCHAFF CHARLES A. PRATT MORT BRISKIN PHIL KARLSON A BCP PRODUCTION  
PG PARENTAL GUIDANCE SUGGESTED  
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*Don't see it alone!*

**BEN**

"**BEN'S SONG**" sung by MICHAEL JACKSON on Motown Records



... COMICS OPINION ...



... this opinion by DERECK CONRAD of St. Louis, Missouri

I don't know why, exactly, you cancelled THE HEAP colored comic and your others, but I'm very glad you did . . . for several reasons. It seems pretty obvious that the colored comic medium is on the way DOWNHILL . . . that they won't last very long . . . and rightfully so, for what they represent in both content and approach is the PAST . . . and although everybody seems to be going for a big last-try effort, the sophistication of today's comic audience is not going to accept it . . .

you publish what can only SERIOUSLY be called a MATURE magazine . . . one of the basic reasons for this is the FINISHED QUALITY of the artwork . . . the black and white magazine format is totally finished artwork . . . It presents a more conservative LOW KEY approach aimed at the older and more intelligent reader more than the colored comics 'holding lines' approach . . .

it's a SHAME that some of the new young and brilliant artists (the so-called fan artists) have gone over to the big-buck colored line . . . the kiddie comics of superheroes and re-hashed movie monsters . . . if they cared more about art and legitimate comics' progress they might care less about money and work within the black and white smaller, the older, market in this field . . .

this opinion represents the first in a series (we hope) of comics-comment by you . . . the reader . . . and we invite your participation . . . be sure to include your photograph when writing . . . we will publish this feature as frequently as you participate . . .

comment today!

DANTE'S  
INFERNO

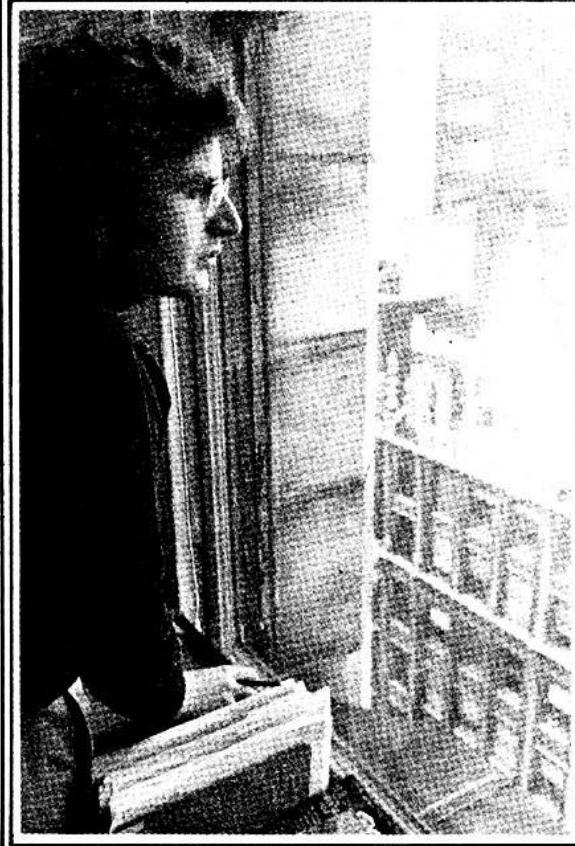
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DRACULA  
GOETHE  
POEMS  
BRAM STOKER

THE SWORDSMAN OF SARN!  
I DIG NIGHTMARE  
THE CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON  
SCREAM SCREEN SCENE

DENNIS WHEATLEY  
THE DEVIL AND ALL HIS WORK  
TALES OF THE MACABRE  
PSYCHO

SCRAP



... this . . .

is HOMICIDAL HERSCHEL WALDMAN



... looking like a homicidal poet if ever we saw one, this is co-publisher H.H.W. optimistically planning for tomorrow . . . he does this by staring out the 15th story New York office window for 3 or 4 days at a time, then turns to Archaic Al and profoundly suggests: "Hey Al, you think maybe we should kill off the HEAP?" . . .

... yes . . . Homicidal can be brutal, sadistic and cruel . . . he is a known free-lance assassin and it is an established FACT he viciously knifed 2 elevator operators, slaughtered 8 cab-drivers, shot 5 subway conductors, and strangled 18 innocent people on the street . . . and that was just on the way to the office one morning . . .

... if you see this guy on the street, roller-coaster, penny arcade, or ANYWHERE usual-or-unusual better HIDE . . . YOU may be NEXT . . .

... Chuck Ward writes: "... I feel confident that you are one company whose editor actually READS and PAYS ATTENTION to their mail . . . fan or otherwise . . ." . . . this is absolutely true, an' we're going to get a little postcard printed up and write personal 'notes' to EVERYBODY who writes in just to let EVERYBODY who writes in KNOW that EVERYBODY who writes in gets their letter read and paid-attention to . . .

... Terry Melen, 30, writes: "... more experimental artwork, more science fiction . . ."

... to tell you the truth folks, science fiction is very unpopular in the 'comics' market, for some unknown and very strange reason that no publisher or editor has ever been able to figure out . . . but we'll publish it in SMALL DOSES from time to time, even the HORROR is our DEFINITE BAG . . . GRUMPY GARDNER FOX has penned a significant work for us titled: THE SWORDSMAN OF SARN! which is the cover story for the upcoming PSYCHO #12 . . . miss it not . . .

... Gary Kindall, 18, desires subscription prices and forms' . . .

... we are terribly, terribly and sincerely, sincerely sorry people . . . no-can-do-at-moment . . . perhaps in the FUTURE we can run a subscription department but not at the moment . . .

... Charles Hart of Chattanooga, writes that HOMICIDAL HERSCHEL WALDMAN is his favourite artist . . .

... I have to tell you this Chuck, but H.H.W. is the PUBLISHER . . . this letter looks really suspicious . . . I think Hersch made it all up himself . . . beats me how he got a cancelled Chattanooga postal mark on the envelope tho' . . .

... ONE more . . . from Mark Davis of Asherville, North Carolina . . . I DIG NIGHTMARE, it is an exceptional horror magazine, but you don't include the really great monsters enough . . . I think the HEAP is great but what about DRACULA (see an upcoming PSYCHO), the CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON, (see an upcoming SCREAM SCREEN SCENE in a

future issue), the WEREWOLF (check out our new werewolf two-part story . . . THE WEREWOLF MACABRE, soon), FRANKENSTEIN, (oh yes yes, very soon, VERY soon), KING KONG, GODZILLA and so on? It also seems that when you do show some of them they are never seen doing much. DIG? . . .

... we DO . . . check out THE CLASSIC CREEPS, a 13 page cover story comin' up soon that'll perfectly fit your likes . . . and watch for HEAVIER HORROR in the future, folk . . . you DEMANDED it . . .

and now we have DEFINITELY run out of space . . . to those many of you who wrote in and didn't get mentioned, don't worry, we'll get round to printing as many names, comments and ideas as'll FIT in these two pages, next issue . . .

... weird rap people . . . R.I.P.



WITNESS THE **ULTIMATE INCIDENT** IN A MAD **SERIES OF DEATHS** -- WEIRD AND **AWFUL ENDS**... FOR THEY WERE PERPETRATED BY A MULTILEGEND THING THAT COULD NOT THINK FOR ITSELF -- COULD ONLY CARRY OUT ORDERS AND HENCE COULD HARDLY BE EXPECTED TO KNOW THAT THE ACT OF **MURDER** IS... **CRIMINALLY WRONG**...

**THEATRE**

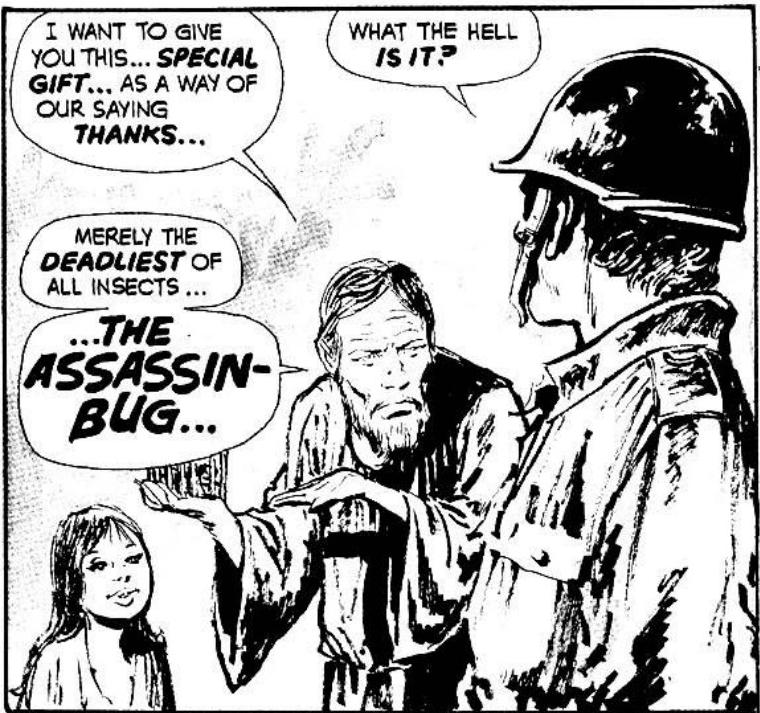
HEWETSON + BORRELL



# NOW THAT YOU KNOW THE **ULTIMATE** -- LET US GO BACK TO THE **BEGINNING** ...TO START OUR TALE OF... **THE ASSASSIN-BUG**

NOW THAT YOU KNOW THE  
**ULTIMATE** -- LET US GO  
BACK TO THE **BEGINNING**  
...TO START OUR TALE OF...

— 1 —





THE OTHERS LAUGHED AT HIM... HE TOLD THEM IT WAS ONLY A PET ... AND THEY LAUGHED -- BUT KEPT THEIR DISTANCE FROM THE LITTLE THING -- FOR IT CARRIED IN ITS VEINS THE SPERM OF INSTANT DEATH...



# ...A HIRED ASSASSIN...

MEET EDWARD HAWK... IN NAM HE WAS A SOLDIER... A GOOD ONE... DID HIS KILLING WITH THE TOUCH OF A PROFESSIONAL... BECAUSE HE WAS...

...STATESIDE, THE MAN WITH THE ASSASSIN-BUG IS A PROFESSIONAL KILLER FOR HIRE...

GET YERSELF A BELLY FULL OF MEDALS IN NAM HAWK?

MY COUNTRY DID WELL BY ME... DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT CICERO... WORRY INSTEAD ABOUT HAVING SOMETHIN' LINED UP FOR ME...

...I'M BACK IN BUSINESS...

WHAT'S IT WORTH?

YEH--WE GOT SOMETHING FOR YOU... HOPE YOU'RE IN A THINKIN MOOD HAWK...

THIS ONE AIN'T GONNA BE EASY...

NICK ROGERS IS IN THE PEN-- GOT HISSELF A PROMISE OF A CHEAP SENTENCE IF HE'LL TALK...

...WE WANT 'IM DEAD...

DON'T ASK ME HOW BABY... IT'D TAKE A FLY TO GET IN THAT CELL WITH A GAT TO...

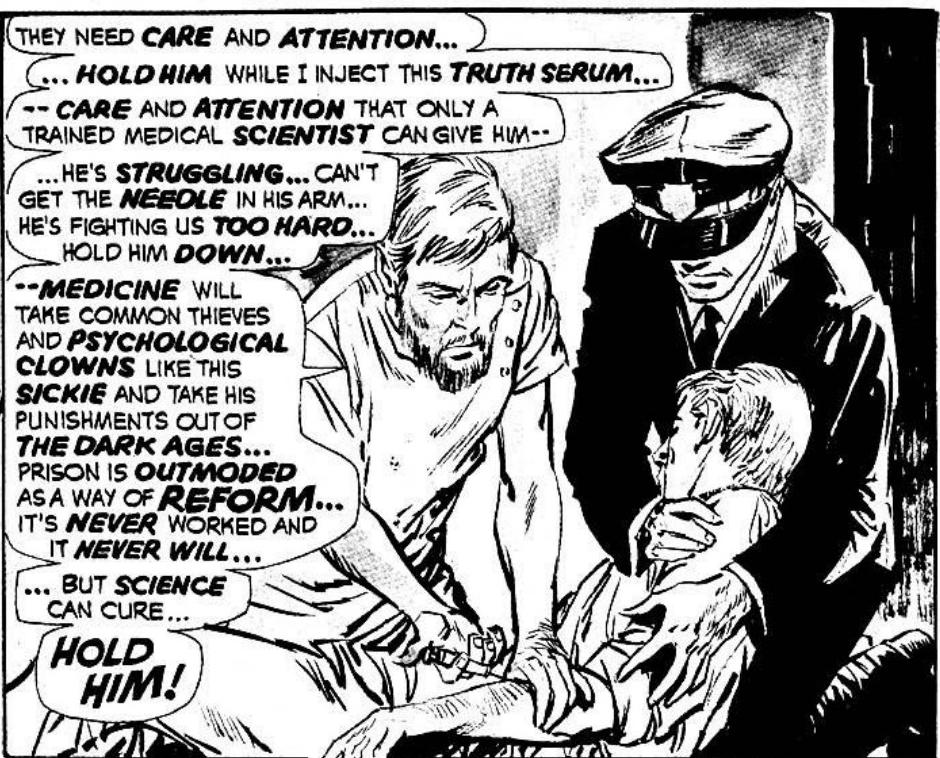
...HEY-- THAT'S IT...

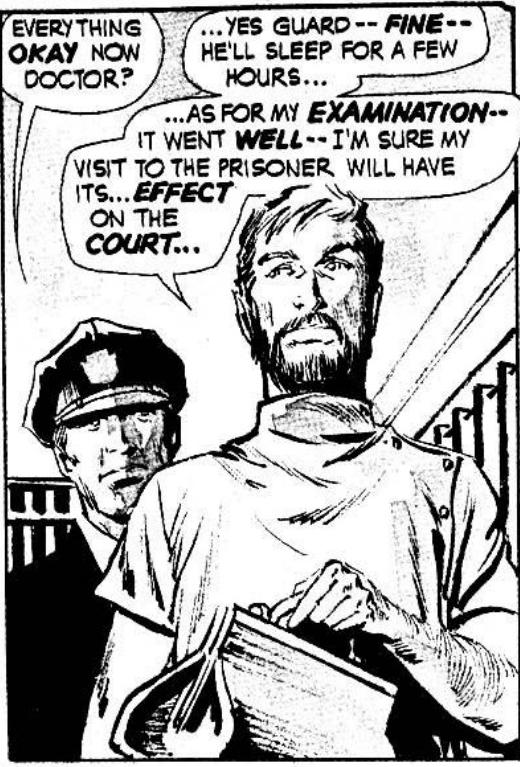
8 GRAND--  
IF YOU CAN DO IT!

BABY-- YOU AN'  
YOU'RE DEADLY LITTLE  
BODY ARE GONNA PAY  
A LITTLE VISIT TO A  
JAIL CELL...

I CAN DO IT!







THIS IS A **BIG** ONE HAWK... 3 GUYS  
RE BEIN' TRANSPORTED FROM THE  
STATE PEN TO **COURT** THIS AFTERNOON  
...YOU GOTTA HIT THEM AT **CLOSE**  
**RANGE**... THERE'S TOO MANY  
**GUARDS**-- SECURITY IS **TOO TIGHT**,  
TO WORK FROM A DISTANCE... THEY  
MUSTN'T **REACH** THE COURTROOM  
HAWK... YOU **UNUNDERSTAND?** IF  
THEY **DO** WE'RE **DEAD**... ALL  
OF US IN THE RACKETS...  
**YOU GOTTA HIT 'EM...**

...YEH...



HAS IT ALL HAPPENED OR HAS IT  
NOT?

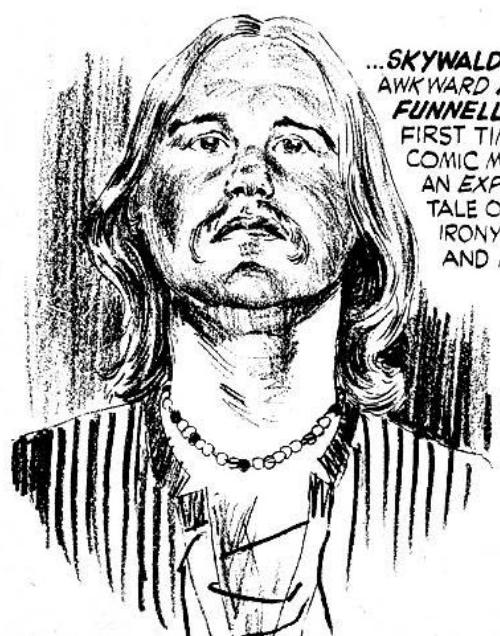


AND IF IT HAS MADE LITTLE  
SENSE-- THEN PERHAPS  
IT'S BECAUSE IT HASN'T!

...IT'S  
TURNING  
ON ME...  
NO BABY... NOT ME  
MY LITTLE BABY...  
NO LITTLE ONE...  
I'VE BEEN YOUR  
FRIEND BABY...  
...YOUR FRIEND!



HE DIDN'T ASK FOR LIFE; IT WAS HANDED TO HIM ON A NOT-SO-SILVER PLATTER. HE DIDN'T ASK FOR KINDNESS OR UNDERSTANDING EITHER, FOR THOSE TWO ITEMS WERE NEVER HANDED TO HIM ON ANYTHING. BUT OTHER THINGS WERE. CRUELTY, INJUSTICE, AND HATE.



...SKYWALD INTRODUCES  
AWKWARD AUGUSTINE  
FUNNELL FOR THE  
FIRST TIME IN THE  
COMIC MEDIUM...WITH  
AN EXPLOSIVE  
TALE OF TORMENT,  
IRONY, RETRIBUTION  
AND HORROR...

# MONSTER MONSTER on the WALL



THEY SAW HIS HEAD BECOME STILL WHEN IT FELL BACK INTO THE SNOW. THE OLDER YOUTH JUMPED OFF THE BOY AND STOOD SILENTLY BESIDE HIS FRIENDS. THEY LOOKED AT EACH OTHER, AND A TRACE OF FEAR HAUNTED THEIR EYES.



THEIR FEAR GREW AND IN A MOMENT, HAD DEVOURIED THEM, MAKING THEM RUN AWAY. THE BOY LAY IN THE COLD SNOW FOR OVER AN HOUR, DURING WHICH TIME SOFT WHITE FLAKES ADDED TO WHAT HAD ALREADY ACCUMULATED. WHEN HE AWOKE, HE WAS SHIVERING AND COUGHING. HIS BODY WAS FROZEN, AND HE COULD FEEL NO PAIN, IN A WAY A BLESSING, FOR HIS WOUNDS WERE DEEP AND THE PAIN, HAD HE BEEN ABLE TO FEEL IT, WOULD HAVE BEEN HORRENDOUS. SOBING, HIS TEARS TURNING TO ICE ON DEFORMED CHEEKS, HE SLOWLY PICKED HIMSELF UP AND ALONE, WALKED DOWN THE DESERTED STREET.



THE TREK HOME WAS LONG AND TIRING. AS HE WALKED, FEELING CAME BACK TO HIS BODY, AND WITH IT, AGONIZING PAIN. WHEN HE FINALLY MADE IT TO THE BUILDING WHICH **SHOULD** HAVE BEEN CALLED CONDEMNED INSTEAD OF HOME, HE WAS TOO WEAK EVEN TO CRY. INSTEAD, HATRED BURNED WITHIN HIM--A HATRED SO POWERFUL THAT HIS BODY SHOOK FROM THE THOUGHT OF IT. HE PASSED HIS PARENTS AT THE SUPPER TABLE, BUT HE SAID NOTHING. THE PARENTS LOOKED AT EACH OTHER, THEN LOWERED THEIR GAZE. THEY DIDN'T HAVE TO SAY ANYTHING. THEY KNEW WHAT HAD HAPPENED. FOR IT HAD HAPPENED BEFORE, AND DEEP DOWN, ALTHOUGH THEY PRAYED IT WOULDN'T, THEY KNEW IT WOULD HAPPEN AGAIN. THE BOY WALKED QUIETLY TO HIS ROOM AND LAY DOWN EXHAUSTED...



YEARS SWEPT BY AND THE BOY WAS EIGHTEEN. HE HAD MOVED MANY TIMES IN THE LAST FEW YEARS, ALWAYS TO GET AWAY FROM THOSE WHO DESPISED HIM. BUT, HE HAD NEVER FORGOTTEN THE ATROCITIES HEAPED UPON HIM ON THAT CERTAIN NIGHT YEARS AGO. HATRED STILL BURNED WITHIN HIM. HE KNEW HIS REVENGE WOULD COME, BUT HE HAD NEVER KNOWN HOW OR WHEN. AND THEN, ON THAT FATEFUL NIGHT OF HIS EIGHTEENTH BIRTHDAY, THE CHANGE OCCURED, AND HE KNEW THE ANSWERS TO BOTH QUESTIONS. SO HERE HE WAS, EXACTLY ONE MONTH AFTER THE RATHER SAD BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION, COMPLETELY AT EASE, AND TOTALLY READY FOR WHAT HE KNEW WOULD HAPPEN.

HE SAW THEM ACROSS THE STREET, BUT HE CONTINUED WALKING, NEVER ONCE GLANCING IN THEIR DIRECTION. HE KNEW THEY WOULD BE TALKING ABOUT HIM, AND THE EXCITEMENT ROSE WITHIN HIM.



HE SAW THEM COMING, AND FOR A SECOND FEAR RACED THROUGH HIM. BUT IT WAS ONLY FOR A SECOND, AND THEN THE CONFIDENCE AND WARMTH OF REVENGE FLOWED THROUGH HIM. HE BEGAN TO SLACKEN HIS PACE.

HE STOPPED AND STOOD STILL FOR A SECOND. THEN, SLOWLY, HE BEGAN TO TURN AROUND. BEFORE HE COULD UTTER A SINGLE WORD, HE FELT THE IRON-HARD FIST SMASH INTO HIS FACE, AND THE INTENDED WORDS DIED ON HIS LIPS.



HE FELL ONTO HIS BACK AND LAY THERE STARING UP AT THOSE WHO HATED HIM. HE SMILED AS HE SAW THE MOON BREAK THROUGH THE CLOUDS, AND WITH THE IRONIC SMILE STILL ON HIS LIPS HE BEGAN TO SPEAK SOFTLY.

I REMEMBER A FEW YEARS AGO. YOU DID THE SAME THING THEN.

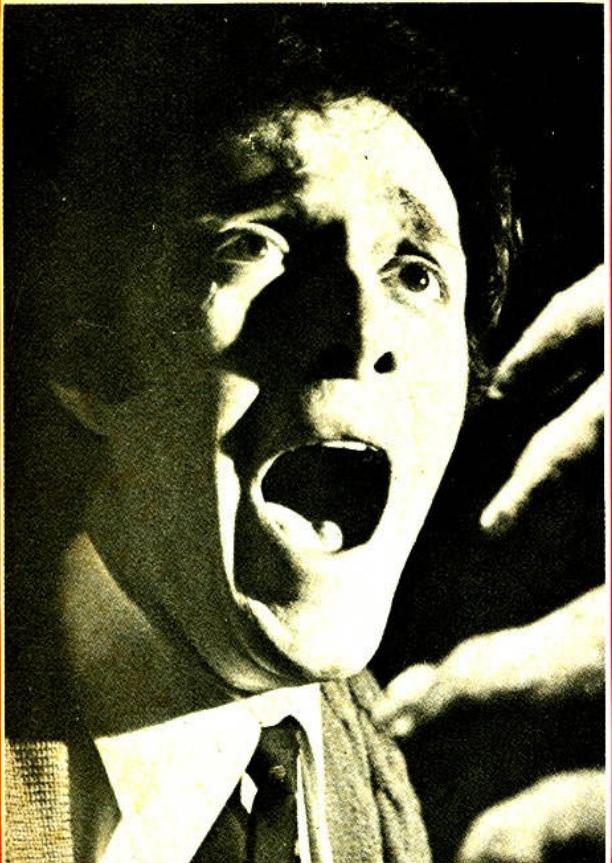
I ALSO REMEMBER SOMETHING ABOUT 'MONSTER MONSTER ON THE WALL'. YOU DIDN'T KNOW HOW TRUE THAT WAS.



HE FELL UPON THEM SAVAGELY, RIPPING THEM APART. THEY NEVER HAD A CHANCE OF ESCAPING. IN BUT A FEW MOMENTS, IT WAS OVER, AND HE STOOD IN THEIR COOLING BLOOD... HOWLING...



AND NOW IT WAS FINISHED. THEY WOULD NO LONGER TORMENT HIM, BUT THERE WERE OTHERS TO DEAL WITH. OTHERS WHO HAD HURT HIM, WHO HAD TO BE PUNISHED. HE CLIMBED THE SMALL RAILING ON A BUILDING THAT LEAD TO THE ROOF, AND WHILE THE MOON DISAPPEARED BEHIND A CLOUD, HE QUICKLY LOST HIMSELF IN DARKNESS.



... SCREAM ...

- ... What ever happened to *Nosferatu*? ...
- ... Who is *I, Slime*? ...
- ... Why... Beware The Dawn's Early Light? ...
- ... Where are The Vampire Letters? ...
- ... When does The Thing In The Box Kill? ...

...when you know the answers you will Have To...

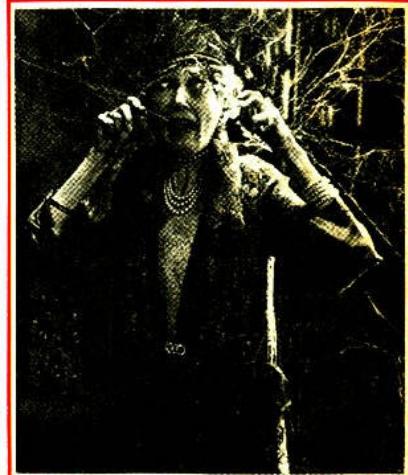
... SCREAM ...

... the Answers are Disturbing, Weird, Grotesque ...  
they come from the maniacal mind of America's master  
of the comics-macabre ... *Archaic Al Hewetson* ...  
they pour out of the pens of these Powerful Graphic  
Artists: *Cintron - Zesar - Gual - Domingo* and  
*Borrell* ... under a wretched cover by *Ken Kelly* ...

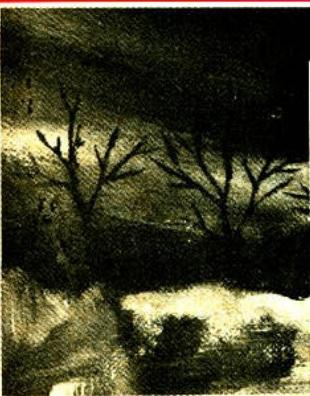


...do you Know how to...

... SCREAM ...



... We will teach you  
how to... SCREAM



... Learn here how to  
**SCREAM**  
Step by awful step...  
Groan by  
awesome groan...!



...it's coming soon in the  
**SKYWALD HORROR MOOD**

... miss nothing not ...

**SCREAM**